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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 IO-13 /085 W
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R 111512Z JAN 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6061
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 0224

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PGOV PINS GH
SUBJECT: COMMITTEE ON UNION GOVERNMENT FORMED

1. AT HIS ANNUAL PRESS CONFERENCE, HEAD OF STATE ACHEAMPONG ANNOUNCED ON JAN 10 THE FORMATION OF A 14-MEMBER AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNION GOVERNMENT, TO WHICH CITIZENS CAN SEND THEIR VIEWS ON THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT. EXACT ROLE OF COMMITTEE, ONCE VIEWS RECEIVED, IS UNCLEAR: ACHEAMPONG MERELY STATED THAT "WHEN THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES ALL THE VIEWS IT CAN, THESE WOULD THEN BE STREAMLINED FOR CONSIDERATION."

2. DR. G. KORANTENG-ADDOW, ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND COMMISSIONER FOR JUSTICE, WILL CHAIR COMMITTEE. MEMBERS ARE:
-MAJOR YAW LARSON, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
-DR. MODIBO OCRAN, COUNSEL, CAPITAL INVESTMENTS BOARD
-MR. KOFI BADU, MANAGING DIRECTOR, GRAPHIC CORPORATION
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-H.E. MR. JOE APPIAH, ROVING AMBASSADOR
-MR. B.S.K. KWAKYE, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
-MR. F. WULFF-TAGOE (POSITION NOT IDENTIFIED)
-TOGBE ADZA TEKPOR VI, OSIE OF AVATIME (A LOCAL CHIEF)
-A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RESEARCH BUREAU MINISTRY OF INFORMATION (NOT IDENTIFIED)
-NII OKAI PESEMAKU III, GBESE MANTSE (A LOCAL CHIEF)

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-DR. M.M. OWUSU-ANSAH, INSTITUTE OF ADULT EDUCATION AND
MEMBER, NATIONAL CHARTER COMMITTEE
-A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL (NOT IDENTIFIED)
-DR. YAU MANU, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
-NAVRO-PIO DR. ADDA (A NORTHERN CHIEF)

3. IN HIS STATEMENT, ACHEAMPONG NOTED THAT AFTER CAREFUL STUDY, HE HAD COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT "ALL OVER THE WORLD, A POLITICAL SYSTEM IS EVOLVED FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY" AND CITED EXAMPLES FROM BRITISH, CHINESE, FRENCH AND AMERICAN HISTORY TO THIS EFFECT. IN SEEKING SUCH A SYSTEM FOR GHANA, HE STRESSED THE NEED "FOR THIS COUNTRY TO INDULGE IN INTROSPECTION, FIND ITS SPIRIT AND COME OUT WITH A FORM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH COULD NOT ONLY BE CALLED THE GHANIAN SYSTEM, BUT (WHICH) ALSO SUITS POLITICAL DEMANDS IN THIS COUNTRY." SUCH A SYSTEM, HE OBSERVED, HAD TO REFLECT THE "CURRENT SPIRIT OF THE NATION . . . ONE OF UNITY."

4. RE A DEFINITE DATE FOR RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE, ACHEAMPONG SAID THAT "WITH THE SUGGESTIONS MADE FOR A UNION GOVERNMENT, THE STAGE HAS BEEN SET FOR A GRADUAL ADVANCE TOWARDS CIVILIAN RULE," BUT DECLINED TO FIX EVEN A GENERAL TIME-FRAME FOR THE TRANSITION.

5. COMMENT: THIS PRESS CONFERENCE IS AN ANNUAL EVENT, HELD JUST BEFORE THE JAN 13 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF ACHEAMPONG'S 1972 COUP. FORMATION OF UNION GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE DOES NOT COME AS SURPRISE. SUCH A MOVE HAD BEEN EXPECTED AND IS CONSISTENT WITH ACHEAMPONG'S APPARENTLY
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GENUINE WISH TO FIND A UNIQUELY GHANIAN SOLUTION TO THE QUESTION OF HOW AND BY WHOM THE COUNTRY CAN BEST BE GOVERNED. ACHEAMPONG SEES HIMSELF CONTINUING ON AS CHIEF OF STATE ONCE SUCH A GOVERNMENT IS EVOLVED AND EXPECTS THE MILITARY WOULD CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE KEY MINISTRIES AND TO EXERT A MUCH GREATER INFLUENCE THAN ANY OTHER INTEREST GROUP. HOWEVER, HE DOES SEEM TO BE WILLING TO BRING MORE CIVILIANS INTO THE REGIME, IF THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT THE DIVISIVE INFLUENCE HE BELIEVES PARTY POLITICS EXERT IN GHANA. WE DOUBT THE NEW COMMITTEE WILL BE ABLE TO SHED MUCH LIGHT ON WHAT IS MEANT BY UNION GOVERNMENT, BUT ACHEAMPONG WILL BE ABLE TO USE IT AS A VEHICLE FOR GRADUALLY INTRODUCING A FEW CAREFULLY-SCREENED CIVILIANS INTO SENIOR POSTS. SMITH

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